

3-0 WIN RAISES WYCOMBE'S HOPES

Sports Mail Special Report

A HOPE of going to the top of the Isthmian League for the first time this season gave Wycombe Wanderers a spur against Maidstone United. They captured the initiative with an early goal and went on to win 3-0.

Wycombe Wanderers: Maskell; Bradshaw, Beck; Baker, Rundle, Gale; Royston, Samuels. Bates, Horseman, Merrick.

Maidstone Utd.: Jeffrey; Leonard, Poole; Wigham, McGuinness. Long; Clay, Angel, Norton, Dawe, Codling.

Referee: L. Vickers (Redhill).

With an unchanged team settling down to their 3-3-4 formation, Wycombe began confidently and one crashing drive by Gale was blocked by a back.

Beck shone in a cool Wycombe defence and both Baker and Gale were active in mid-field play. Both the left wingers, Merrick for Wycombe and Codling for Maidstone, initiated some threatening raids.

It came as no surprise when Wycombe took the lead after ten minutes, MERRICK seizing on a pass from Horseman and scoring from an oblique angle from the wing.

Maskell saved the Wanderers with a full-length save from Angel soon afterwards and then Horseman missed a great chance to increase the home lead when he shot wide from a Merrick centre.

The busy Merrick deserved

better luck with a daring header from a corner by Bates.

Exchanges were now fast and furious and with some wild kicking and boisterous tackling from both sides there were many minor injuries in clashes at top speed.

But Maidstone were lucky to escape when a shot from Bates skidded across the mouth of an empty goal.

Half-time: Wycombe Wanderers 1, Maidstone 0.

Wycombe increased their lead two minutes after the interval when centre forward BATES converted a penalty after he had been brought down by left back Poole, as he was going through. Then, as Wycombe relentlessly applied the pressure, goalkeeper Jeffrey saved well from Gale and again from Bates.

Then another move initiated by Samuels put Bates away on the right. Cutting in, BATES flashed in a tremendous left-foot drive, which beat Jeffrey ten minutes before the end.

RESULT:

WYCOMBE WANDERERS 3
MAIDSTONE 0